1:Spier E-8 (1929-1932) 1933 NT15 River Yumans NT15
Maricopa

CHAPTER II

BASIS OF SUBSISTENCE

177 241 Since the basis of subsistence of the Maricopa and their allies has changed greatly since aboriginal days it is by no means easy to draw a picture of the original food quest. Even before white settlers appeared, Maricopa acquisition of wheat from Mexico had almost entirely displaced the cultivation of corn, and since that day dependence on traders' products has almost obliterated [439] what remained of their original habits.

262 184 The staples of the Maricopa and of the Halchidhoma while still on the Colorado seem to have been identical and used in much the same proportion. There is a possibility, however, that the Halchidhoma cultivated corn somewhat more than their Gila relatives and had access to more fish. In contrast, then, they depended less on mesquite and rabbits. This must remain an inference based on what is known of other lower California peoples, since Halchidhoma informants no longer know precisely what ancestral life on the Colorado was like.

22 [243] [462] The Maricopa seem to have depended largely on gathering mesquite beans, hunting jackrabbits, and on fishing. Relatively little corn was cultivated. The picture of the food quest drawn by informants shows that women were occupied every day gathering mesquite beans during the season, while the men hunted hard by for rabbits or fished. The quest was unceasing: "people starved in those days unless men and women kept at it all day long." Kutox maintained that in those days children were undernourished: "a child of two or more might not be able to stand because it lacked food." On the other hand, Bartlett (1852) makes it appear that Pima and Maricopa cultivation was so great as to allow long periods of inactivity.[1]

[146] 197 Yet mesquite was abundant in the valley, especially in the

[1] Bartlett, *Personal Narrative*, II, 264. [Text continues on page 50.]